

East Central Sprang From Meager Start As Told in Beautiful Pageant Poetry

By Mrs. W. W. Newsom, head of the English Department

East Central Junior college functioned for the first time as a Junior College in 1928. From a meager start of two teachers, no equipment or classrooms, and no dormitories, the school has steadily grown and expanded until at present there are 16 teachers and over 400 students. The first class to attend East Central had only 20 students in it. The corner of the dining room was used as a class room where the only two teachers, a Mr. Marshall and Mrs. W. W. Newsom, who is now head of the English department, taught the elementary subjects.

At the end of that session the Junior College commission came and inspected the school. They allowed the students attending credit for that year's work, and thus started the beginning of one of the state's most progressive junior colleges.

The following poem written at a recent pageant given by the college will tell of the beginning, the aims and ideals, and progress of the school:

I dipt into the future far as human eye could see;
Saw the vision of this school and all the wonder that would be.
Saw the Dreamers catch the vision—heard them sound the note of
faith;
Heard the echoes from the platform of the Legislative halls.

Behold their names in bold relief written on the scroll of time.

Then the Builders caught the vision—county wide the message ran;
Came support from every angle of this junior college zone—
Newton first, Neshoba next, followed soon by Scott and Leake.
Others from the state at large—other states as well
Caught the spirit of this college and then came here, our ranks to
swell.

Again I dipt into the future far as human eye could see;
Saw the campus filled with buildings—all equipped with modern
means

For the service of the youths that for training here would come.
Saw the farms under wise direction bringing forth a splendid
yield;

Saw the barns all overflowing with the produce from the fields;
Saw the barnyards stocked with thorough-breds, some from islands
across the seas;

Saw the milk-pails overflowing; heard the barnyard's noisy din-
grunting pigs and cackling hens;

Fruits and vegetables galore added to the bounteous store.
Saw the class-rooms filled with students that for training here
had come;

Saw the sacrifice of the parents as they worked and toiled back
home,

That boys and girls might profit from the college at their door.
Saw the corps of faithful teachers chosen with discretion rare
To give their time and knowledge to the youths assembled here.

Training Christian men and women, Tomorrow's citizens to be.
Saw the faith of the Dreamers and Builders being realized in
E. C. J. C.

Now the vision changes—I wake and see that my dream has come
true.

East Central Junior College, builded on Faith, serving the most
worthy area in the State of Mississippi, looks out upon a new day, and
the Spirit of the school says:

"On to victory;
True we'll ever be;
Steadfast and loyal to Old E. J. C."

(Poem borrowed from
Tennyson's "Locksley Hall"
yes Ovid Vicksen
11-2-87

You will probably think my subject rather queer but most people never cease to be curious about love letters. Most people enjoy reading a real good one even if it wasn't meant for them. Perhaps they just wonder if someone has discovered a new way to say "I love you."

According to Samuel Johnson, a love letter is a deliberate and written conversation of affection, in which the soul lies naked. Those who have never written or received a love letter are to be pitied. Perhaps it is true that the lovers of today do not write such eloquent letters as those Casanovas of the old times, but they feel the same things in the same way anyhow. Telephone conversations have taken the place of many of our love letters of today. As we read some of the old love letters, we find records of passion, folly, madness, loyalty, and devotion. They go from the depths of pain to the ecstasies of successful love. Every love letter writer is a poet for the time being. He dreams of and lives in a new world and he puts that world on paper. The freedom and glory of a love letter is worth all the lip-talk in the world.

Let us look back to some of the oldest and most famous of the world's love letters. Sometimes those dashing lovers used such long words and such unfamiliar phrases that I don't even know what they were talking about.

Henry VIII's letters to Anne Boleyn always interest us. Reading from one written in 1528 we hear:

My Mistress and Friend,--My heart and I surrender ourselves into your hands, beseeching you to hold us commended to your favor, and that by absence your affection to us may not be lessened;---the longer the days are the more distant is the sun, and nevertheless the hotter; so it is with our love, for by absence we are kept at a distance from one another, and yet it retains its fervor at least on my side. I hope the like on yours, assuring you that on my part the pain of absence is already too great for me; and when I think of the increase of that which I am forced to suffer, it would be almost intolerable, but for the firm hope I have of your unchangeable affection for me."

Yes, Henry loved Anne but he later had her sent to prison where she was beheaded. That's a lover for you.....sometimes.

What if you were to receive a letter like that? Perhaps you would think that Johnny had suddenly lost his mind.

The letters of the playwright, Thomas Otway, to Elizabeth Barry, one of the most popular English actresses in the 17th century reveal his devotion, madness, and pain. After seven years Otway was driven to despair and ruin by his hopeless love for the heartless and mercenary Elizabeth. These are some selections taken from some of his letters to her;

Mrs. Stella Neussome's speech titled "Love Letters"
apparently prepared and delivered during the
early 1930's. Found in her personal copy of
the College Catalog later donated to the college to
the early years.

"My Tyrant,--I endure too much torment to be silent, and have endured it too long not to make the severest complaint. I love you; I dote on you; my love makes me mad when I am near you and despair when I am from you. Sure, of all miseries love is to me the most intolerable; it haunts me in my sleep, perplexes me when waking; every melancholy thought makes my fears more powerful and every delightful one makes my wishes more unruly.----I loved you early---Though other arms have held you, that I love you with that tenderness of spirit, that purity of truth, that sincerity of heart, that I could sacrifice the nearest friends or interests I have on earth barely to please you. If I had the whole world, it should surely be yours; for with it I could but be miserable were you not mine.----your smiles have transported, your frowns awed me.----I cannot so much as look at you without confusion.---Everything you do is a new charm to me. I must have you mine.----This minute my heart aches for you."

Yes, Thomas really loved Elizabeth.

The great Voltaire wrote to his beloved Olympe Dunoyer: "They can take my life, but not the love I feel for you,---life would be too burdensome if I had not the dear hope of being loved by the one dearest to me in the whole world.---I adore you and swear that my love will last as long as my life.----Only you can make me happy, and I am already too happy when I think of the tender feelings you have for me.---Goodbye, my adorable Olympe, goodbye, my dear. If one could write kisses, I would send you an infinity of them, by the courier, I kiss instead of you, your precious letters, in which I read my happiness."

Now who said the old folks didn't kiss? Of course, Johnny wouldn't write it like that. He would just say, "Gosh, but I could just take you in my arms and kiss you from now on."

Oh, now who but Laurence Sterne, the social lion of London in the 18th century would have thought of writing his wife such a thing as this while he was away from home: "I have arrived here safe and sound except for the hole in my heart which you have made,----I am so miserable to be separated from my dear, dear Kitty."

To his wife Mozart wrote: "If I were to tell you everything, what I do with your dear portrait, you would laugh a good deal." By reading the rest of the letter and seeing what he did with the picture, I discovered that Mozart loved his wife a great deal also.

While fighting in the American Revolution the French general Lafayette wrote home to his wife in France: "If my fingers be at all guided by my heart, it is not necessary

to see clearly to tell you that I love you, and that I shall love you all my life,-----You will always love me, will you not?----I am each day more miserable from having quit you, my dearest love;-----Farewell, my life; I am in such haste that I know not what I write, but I do know that I love you more tenderly than ever, that the pain of this separation was necessary to convince me how very dear you are to me, and I would give at this moment half of my existence for the pleasure of embracing you again and telling you with my own lips how well I love you.-----"

Napoleon seemed to be quite a master at writing love letters and it so happens that they were not all to Josephine. To her he wrote: "Indeed, I am very uneasy, my love, at receiving no news of you; write me quickly four pages full of agreeable things which will fill my heart with the pleasantest feelings. I hope before long to crush you in my arms and cover you with a million kisses burning as though beneath the equator."

Josephine always dominated Napoleon's senses and his heart, but she deceived and disappointed him and finally he could no longer be deluded about her. He wrote to Madame Walewska some also. To Marie Louisa, his second wife, he wrote: "Marie, my sweet Marie, my first thought is for you, my first desire is to see you again."

I wonder if we ever stopped long enough in our history to know about this side of Napoleon's life. He wasn't fighting wars all the time.

The sad Edgar Allen Poe wrote to Mrs. Whitman: "Could I but have held you close to my heart and whispered to you the strange secrets of its passionate history,----Your hand rested within mine and my whole soul shook with a tremulous ecstasy:----think of me----if you died I would willingly--oh, joyfully--joyfully go down with you into the night of the grave. Write soon--soon--oh, soon!--but not much. Do not weary or agitate yourself for my sake. Say to me those coveted words that would turn Earth into Heaven."

Franz Liszt, the great pianist, wrote to Countess D' Agoult "I can do nothing but dream of you; I cannot talk to anyone, and to you even less than to the others! Oh, if you knew only half the happiness it would be to me to see you here tomorrow, the day after tomorrow. I would not hesitate to say to you, 'Come, come'.....Marie, Marie, oh, give me my life again, your love, let your adorable tears refresh, like dew from heaven, my poor dry and exhausted heart!"

Even Samuel Clemens took time out from Huckleberry Finn to write Mrs. Clemens: "Today I haven't a thing to report except that I love you; that I love you and think of you all the time

and do immensely admire you--your mind as much as your person!"

What would we think if we were to receive such letters today
---or maybe some of you do? There may be lots of ways to
say it, but frankly, without so much beating around the bush,
I prefer just the plain old "I love you."

Heard
Lamar County
about 40 yrs

old woman
pleased
as soon

Old woman had a little pig
Uhn - Uhn - Uhn

Old woman had a little pig
Couldn't eat much 'cause it
wasn't very big
Uhn - Uhn - Uhn.

Little pig died for want of breath
Uh - Uh - Uh

Little pig died for want of breath
Wasn't that an awful death?
Uh - Uh - Uh -

Old woman sobbed and sighed
Uh - Uh - Uh

Old woman sobbed and sighed
Then she lay right down and died
Uh - Uh - Uh -

Old man died of grief
Uh - Uh - Uh

Old man died of grief
Wasn't that a great relief?
Uh - Uh - Uh

There they lay, all those three
Uh - Uh - Uh

There they lay, all those three
Old man, old woman, little piggy
uh, uh - uh

and frequently
I suppose that women are one of the most widely discussed subjects there is, especially so for the men.. Today most men think of women as doing only such things as keeping house, washing, sewing, minding the children, and cooking. Quite a few work in offices and do other such things that don't call for so much strength and brawn. Oh, if these dumb men only knew what the poor women have been through with at one time or another.

Of the billion and a half human beings on the earth, one half, or about seven hundred million, are females. Boys, had you ever thought of this before? How comfortless, however, was the first woman who stood upon this planet! How economical her dowry! She was a pitiful and feeble thing. She had no tools of peaceful industry or experience. She had poor ways of expressing her thoughts or her sense of beauty. She had no theory of the life below and poorer conceptions of the heavenly world. Nature mocked her. But even this poorly equipped woman had more brain than was sufficient to meet the demands of bodily existence. Her shop was ample enough for it was the vaulted sky; but her tools and materials and methods were of the simplest kinds.

The women among savage tribes are pictured to us as abject creatures, born under an evil star, the brutalized slave of man, to be kicked or killed at his pleasure. Most of the unfit ones were weeded out by their disgusted lords and masters and killed. This is one way to account for the great industry and patience of women, that have been educated through their trials in the "good old days."

Woman has always been known as the food bringer. To cook the dinner, name the dishes, and serve the food is a burdensome task these days, but just think of all the primitive woman had to do. There is proof that women were the builders of the first granaries and storehouse of provisions. A stroll through any market house will be convincing that they still keep up the ancient custom of guarding bread. The early women were seen in the role of

Mrs. Stella Newsome's early 1930's speech titled "Women". Original copies of "Women", "Love Letters" and a poem from Lamar County in the late 1800's in Mrs. Newsome's handwriting have been kept by Dr. Brad Zucker for the last 40 years.

potter, butcher, cook, beast of burden, fire maker, miller, stonecutter, weaver, engineer, baker, and preserver of food. Add to this the function of brewer, and you have no bad collection of primitive industries performed by one little body, all of which underlie occupations which in our day involve the outlay of millions of dollars and the co-operation of thousands of men.

The primitive woman was a weaver. Up until the introduction of machinery, the textile art was her own. This art remains yet peculiarly the property of those who originated it, a fact that should not be overlooked by those who seek the good of women.

Strickly speaking, savage women were not tanners. They were the mothers of tanners. They had a name for every skin on earth. From these skins they made clothes, houses, boats, and vessels to hold their food. The Indian woman's hardest work was at the time of the fall hunt. The Indian men would always kill the buffalos, but the squaws had the job of skinning and cutting the animals up. The meat cut from the bones was tied up in the skin and packed to camp. Marrow bones and hump ribs roasted on the coals served for most delicious suppers after the day's work, but the entrails formed the principal food during the hunt. All of these were prepared by the women and brought to camp.

Women were the first ceramic artisans and developed all the technique, the forms, and the uses of pottery. Long ago women made pottery for themselves to wear out and only a little for the convenience or delight of men. The very first woman that made pottery, perhaps, set the vessel on her head and went to the spring for water. This same woman used another jar to cook food and another to serve it, and another to keep it clean and away from the insects. What are millions of her great-grandchildren doing this very day but the very same things? It matters not who makes potters, they are making it for women. Their convenience alone is consulted in its form and material. Though her hands be no longer grimed with the paste, her wants and her imagination perside over the wheel.

From woman's back to the car and the stately ship is the history of transportation. I do not wonder that the ship carpenter carves the head of a woman on the prow of his vessel, nor that locomotives and railroad appliances should be addressed as she. In the early days the backs of women were palace cars and freight cars, and the woman herself supplied the energy. In co-operation women have always been weak. There are few duties that they have in common. Even as beasts of burden they seldom worked in pairs.

Women have always tried to be beautiful.. They have done everything from painting their feet red, to tatooing their whole bodies. They have pierced their lips and cheeks, wore rings and bones in their noses. The wove flowers into their hair and could do it up in the most marvelous coiffures. We still see this more than ever in the present day. Women have changed little in their love for beauty.

If women now sit on thrones, if the most beautiful painting in the world is of a mother and her child, if the image of a woman crowns the dome of the American Capitol, if in allegory and metaphor and painting and sculpture, the highest ideals are women, it is because they have a right to be there. By all their drudgery and patience, by all of their suffering and kindness, they have earned their right to be there.

End
Woman has even had a great part in the origin of language. They found ways to express their ideas and to name the industries which they founded. It is a well known fact that women talk more than men, but then they have so much more to talk about. Women have been the conservators of speech.

It's true that they're illogical;
It's true their arguments are brittle;
It's true that women talk too much----
But then they say so little.